



Superior Court of California County of Orange

NEWS RELEASE

Media and Community Relations Office
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WEST JUSTICE CENTER DRUG COURT OPEN HOUSE AND GRADUATION

Westminster - The Orange County Superior Court, West Justice Center will hold its first Drug Court Open House and Graduation on **Friday, June 16, 2000, at 3:00 p.m.** to celebrate the creation of the new West Justice Center Drug Court and the accomplishments of the participants who have successfully completed the rigorous requirements of this non-traditional court program. Judge David A. Thompson will preside at the ceremony, which will include guest speakers Senator Joseph L. Dunn, 34th District, and Supervisor James Silva, 2nd District

The ceremony will be held in the Jury Assembly Room at the West Justice Center, located at 8141 13th Street, Westminster, California.

The Orange County Drug Court program is a collaboration of the Orange County Superior Court, the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the Probation Department, the Health Care Agency, the Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies.

The mission of the program is to provide a non-adversarial response to select non-violent offenders charged with felony drug possession. Through comprehensive treatment and supervision, the program seeks to enable participant addicts to become drug-free, productive members of the community. The four-phase program has intensive supervision by a drug court probation officer, individual and group counseling provided by the Health Care Agency's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, and frequent court appearances to discuss the participant's progress. Further, participants are subject to search and seizure during the program and are frequently contacted by probation and law enforcement personnel at their homes to ensure compliance with program requirements. The participants are required to submit to routine, frequent drug tests, attend self-help meetings (AA, NA, etc.), maintain employment and/or enroll in an educational or vocational training program. Participants are

required to obtain their GED prior to drug court graduation if they do not possess a high school diploma or GED. In addition, participants with young children are required to attend special parenting and educational classes.

Drug Courts have come a long way since their inception in 1989; there are now more than 400 drug courts operating nationally. In California there are more than 80 jurisdictions operating drug courts serving a client base of over 8,000. Drug Courts are actively involved in breaking the cycle of drug addiction and crime in our communities and successfully graduating productive citizens. Orange County operates drug courts in the South Justice Center (Laguna Niguel), the Central Justice Center (Santa Ana), the North Justice Center (Fullerton), and the West Justice Center (Westminster). A juvenile drug court program began in September, 1999 at the Lamoreaux Justice Center (Orange).

For more information, contact, Kathi Chapman at (714) 896-7441.

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